

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 SAB-01 PM-04 INR-07 PRS-01

L-03 /044 W

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P 281805Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4957

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 5247

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: TACK STATEMENTS AT NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE

REF: A. LIMA 7038; B. STATE 203782

SUMMARY: ASIDE FROM ONE FREQUENTLY SENSATIONAL PAPER, LOCAL PRESS MADE NO PARTICULAR POINT OF OR COMMENT ON TACK ACCUSATIONS IN LIMA REGARDING U.S. MILITARY MANEUVERS IN CANAL ZONE. GN WAS INFORMALLY AWARE OF MANEUVERS IN ADVANCE, AND INFORMALLY SIGNALLED TO U.S. THAT IT WAS DENOUNCING THEM AT LIMA, THROUGH MILITARY INTELLIGENCE CHANNEL. WE HAVE BEEN AWARE, EQUALLY INFORMALLY, FOR SOME DAYS OF GN ADMINISTRATIVE MARCH (PARA 6, REF B). WE ARE INCLINED TO ATTRIBUTE TACK STATEMENTS TO DEALING IN NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE COIN OF THE REALM, RATHER THAN TO SERIOUS EFFORT TO CREATE DOMESTIC POLITICAL CLIMATE AGAINST U.S. IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO BUNKER VISIT. END SUMMARY.

1. TO DATE, LOCAL PRESS PLAY ACCORDED TO LIMA CONFERENCE HAS BEEN APPROVING BUT NEITHER OVERLY MILITANT NOR OVERLY SPECIFIC (SEE USIS PANAMA 5218 FOR MEDIA REACTION WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27), WITH MOST PAPERS RELYING SOLELY ON WIRE SERVICES. AFTERNOON "EL PANAMA AMERICA" FOR AUGUST 27 FEATURED "EXCLUSIVE" UNBYLINED STORY UNDER FRONT-PAGE BANNER READING "SOUTHCOM FORCES EXPECT ATTACK (ESPERAN) FROM PANAMA"; THIS CONSISTED OF RATHER  
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GENERAL REPETITION OF TACK STATEMENTS REF B. MORNING

"MATUTINO" FOR AUGUST 28 CARRIES REPORT OF MEDIA REACTION IN LIMA REFERRING ONLY INDIRECTLY TO TACK STATEMENTS; "CRITICA" COVERAGE CONSISTS SOLELY OF APPROVING EDITORIAL MAKING NO REFERENCE TO U.S. FORCES IN ZONE; "ESTRELLA" HAS ONLY BRIEF AP ITEM UNRELATED TO PANAMA.

2. GN WAS INFORMALLY AWARE, ON MILITARY LEVEL, THAT BATTALION MINUS OF 82ND AIRBORNE WOULD BE HOLDING MANEUVERS IN ZONE, BUT SIGNED GOP INTENTION TO DENOUNCE THIS BY PHONE CALL OF AUGUST 26 FROM GN G-2 COL. NORIEGA TO U.S. MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IN ZONE (SEE IR NO. 21231 0370 75, 470TH MI GP FT AMADOR, SENT INFO STATE). EQUALLY INFORMALLY, AND AGAIN THROUGH STRICTLY MILITARY-TO-MILITARY CHANNEL, GN APPRISED MILGROUP OF ITS ADMINISTRATIVE MARCH (PARA 6 REF A) ON AUGUST 20, AND MILGROUP HAS OBTAINED (AUGUST 27) ROUTINE CLEARANCE FROM SOUTHCOM FOR SAME.

3. COMMENT: IN VIEW OF ADVANCE INFORMAL MILITARY CONTACTS ON BOTH GN AND U.S. ACTIVITIES, WE CONCUR WITH DEPARTMENT'S FEELING THAT CHARGE OF DRAWING BACK FROM COORDINATION IS SOMETHING OF RED HERRING, ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT BE PREFERABLE IF GROUND RULES WERE BETTER SPECIFIED TO PRECLUDE MISUNDERSTANDING. GN IS AWARE THAT ITS ADVANCE INFORMAL INFO ON U.S. MANEUVER WAS NOT REALLY OFFICIALLY AUTHORIZED AND INFORMS US THAT ITS ADVANCE INFO TO MILGROUP WAS EQUALLY UNOFFICIAL. ON OTHER HAND, RELATIVE SCARCITY AND DISPERSAL OF FACTUAL (OR SUPPOSEDLY SO) PRESS COVERAGE AND ABSENCE OF EDITORIAL COMMENT ACCORDED TO TACK'S LIMA STATEMENT IS NOTABLE. FROM IT, WE ALSO INFER THAT NO SERIOUS EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO USE THESE STATEMENTS FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL PURPOSES. GOP HAS DEMONSTRATED IN THE PAST THAT IT IS MORE THAN CAPABLE OF PRODUCING FAR BETTER PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN IF IT REALLY INTENDS TO DO SO. FOR THESE REASONS, WE ARE INCLINED TO ATTRIBUTE TACK'S STATEMENTS TO HIS DEALING IN NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE COIN OF THE REALM. WE DO NOT FIND THIS PARTICULARLY SURPRISING. THE CONFERENCE HAD TO HEAR SOMETHING, AND PANAMA IS PROBABLY ALREADY UNPOPULAR ENOUGH DUE TO ITS FORTHRIGHT DEFENSE OF ISRAEL IN LIMA. IN OUR OPINION, REAL TEST AS TO PANAMANIAN INTENTIONS AT THIS STAGE WILL BE LANGUAGE OF WHATEVER RESOLUTION (WE ASSUME THERE WILL BE ONE) LIMA CONFERENCE ADOPTS ON CANAL ISSUE. END COMMENT. CONFIDENTIAL

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JORDEN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, SPEECHES, MILITARY EXERCISES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 28 AUG 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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